FBIS

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'Arafat Appeals For Halt to Iraq-Iran War

JN291801 Baghdad Voice of PLO in Arabic 1553 GMT 29 Mar 85

["Appeal" from Yasir 'Arafat, PLO Executive Committee chairman and commander in chief of the Palestinian revolution forces, on 28 March — read by announcer]

[Text] In my name, on behalf of the Palestinian people, on behalf of the Arab masses, on behalf of the Islamic nation, and on behalf of the oppressed people in the world, I address my fraternal warm appeal to the Iraqi and Iranian leaderships to confront the current escalation in the war; to stop shedding Muslim blood; and to mobilize all forces toward Jerusalem in order to liberate it from the yoke of the Zionist enemy and its imperialist and colonialist allies, who ignited this war in order to support the enemy's occupation of the holy places in Palestine and to escalate its terrorism against both the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples in Lebanon — the Lebanese and Palestinians who, with the Iraqi and Iranian peoples, are paying heavily for this war.

For the sake of all those people, I reiterate my appeal to the Iraqi and Iranian leaderships to immediately stop shelling the cities, proceeding from the foundations and principles presented by the Islamic Good Offices Committee and the committee stemming from the nonaligned countries.

As I make this appeal, I call on the Iraqi and Iranian leaderships to allow these Islamic good offices and those of the nonaligned countries and others to play their role and to work for acheiving an honorable solution in accordance with the principles of Islam, the oppressed people, and the Nonaligned Movement. In this appeal, I repeat what I have always announced and tried to achieve — to reach an honorable solution and to immediately stop this fighting in order to stop the bloodshed of Muslims and to save Jerusalem, the first of the two kiblahs and the third most sacred mosque. I greatly hope that the Iranian leadership will respond to this appeal. May God support our efforts.

[Signed] Yasir 'Arafat, PLO Executive Committee chairman and commander in chief of the Palestinian revolution forces.

Palestinian Reaction to Refugee Camp Attacks Detailed

Democratic Alliance Spokesman Comments

JN301300 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 30 Mar 85

[Text] In Damascus, a spokesman for the Palestinian Democratic Alliance has stated the following: In reply to the attacks carried out by the Phalange groups and the [Israeli] enemy forces on the 'Ayn al-Hulwah and Al-Miyah wa Miyah refugee camps, we assert that the aim of these criminal acts is to drag the Palestinians to internecine fighting and fabricated battles.

The spokesman asserted the need to hold complete coordination between the popular committees in the camps and the national Lebanese forces, to continue their work, and to mobilize all forces to abort the objectives of the new agression.

'Fascist' Lebanese Forces Denounced

JN311810 Baghdad Voice of PLO in Arabic 1544 GMT 31 Mar 85

[Text] On the battles raging in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah and Al-Miyah wa Miyah camps, a responsible information source in the PLO stated the following:

The fascist Lebanese Forces, which are supported by the Zionist invasion forces, have resumed military operations against the 'Ayn al-Hulwah and Al-Miyah wa Miyah camps. These forces dispatched large units toward the two camps last Saturday after preparing for their attack by concentrated shelling on the two camps, using artillery and missiles. These forces also used in their brutal shelling internationally prohibited splinter, plastic, and cluster explosives. These are the same type of explosives the enemy army uses in its war of annihilation against our people and nation. As a result of this brutal shelling, 35 citizens in the two camps — aged, women, and children — were martyred and 74 were injured. The brutal shelling also caused heavy propoerty damage and loss of life in the two camps.

The fascist Lebanese Forces' violent attack led to the retreat of the Lebanese Army forces from their positions into the two camps, where fierce fighting is now taking place on several axes in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp. Forces of the Lebanese Army along with Palestinian militia in the camp and Lebanese organizations in Sidon are participating in this fighting.

The timing of this battle against the Palestinian camps and the brutal shelling of these camps with internationally prohibited explosives, which caused a big massacre of innocent people today, in addition to the hideous massacre the Zionist army has committed in the (Iqlim al-Tuffah) and Jba' area, clearly reveals the premeditated criminal plan against which the Palestinian revolution and its leadership have warned. The Zionist enemy and its agents have drawn up this plan against the Palestinian camps and the Lebanese cities and villages in order to expel their citizens so as to establish a factional canton.

The PLO warns the Zionist enemy government and its fascist agents in the Lebanese forces of the consequences of their hideous massacres of innocent citizens in the camps, villages, and cities in southern Lebanon. The PLO also calls on world public opinion and international, humanitarian, and UN organizations to quickly and seriously act to stop these crimes, denounce them, and deter the aggressors.

'Arafat 'Closely Watching' Situation

JN311828 Baghdad Voice of PLO in Arabic 1616 GMT 31 Mar 85

[Text] Our radio correspondent has learned that brother leader Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] is closely watching the volatile situation in the Palestinian camps and Sidon and the southern Lebanese areas which were exposed to airborne operations. Brother leader Abu 'Ammar has held contacts with several Arab and friendly countries to urge them to act in order to confront the consequences of the volatile situation. He also instructed the PLO representatives to the United Nations to move quickly in

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Al-Wazir Confers With Bendjedid in Algiers

JN091820 Baghdad Voice of PLO in Arabic 1615 GMT 9 Apr 85

[Text] Brother Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian revolution forces, met with Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid in Algiers yesterday. They reviewed the political situation in the Arab region, the situation and tribulation of the Palestinian people in the occupied homeland, and the massacres against the Palestinian camps in southern Lebanon at the hands of the Zionist enemy and its agents. During the meeting, the Algerian president asserted his country's firm and principled stand toward the Palestine cause, the Palestinian people, and the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. He said that Algeria will always support the Palestinian people and their right to establish their independent state. He also asserted the need for the PLO's unity in order to continue the Palestinian struggle and to protect the achievements attained by this struggle.

Brother Abu Jihad also met with senior Algerian officials. They reviewed and discussed the political situation, developments in the Palestine cause, Palestinian-Algerian relations, and ways of strengthening the historic ties between the Palestinian and Algerian people.

Voice of PLO on Cabinet Change in Jordan

JN092027 Baghdad Voice of PLO in Arabic 1545 GMT 9 Apr 85

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Brothers, the recent Cabinet change in Jordan has aroused and is still arousing the interest of many Arab newspapers and news agencies. Each has commented on and analyzed the change from its own special angle and in light of its own political stands. This has led to different opinions, analyses, and comments on this subject. We will now review and discuss these opinions and analyses in order to point out the stands that are for or against an issue which we consider to be purely an internal Jordanian affair. Some political analysts and commentators in those Arab newspapers seem to have preceded events and judged the Cabinet change on the basis of their preconceived political stands and conclusions. This is what we want to discuss here.

One main preconceived stand and conclusion is that this Cabinet change has come at the expense of Palestinian-Jordanian relations, because it would lead to a rapprochement with Syria. What makes us doubt the credibility and accuracy of these opinions — opinions that reflect an attempt to fish in troubled waters — is the fact that they depended on incorrect political events and ignored established political facts. The people voicing these opinions have concentrated on casting doubts on the viability of Palestinian-Jordanian relations, ignoring the deep motives and material foundations on which relations between the Palestinian and Jordanian people are founded — motives and foundations that always emphasize the historic roots of these firm, strategic relations. These relations are not subject to certain persons or circumstances. These relations may have had their low and high periods at certain times due to certain circumstances and the policies of certain people, but all of this does not negate the true historic relations between the Palestinian and Jordanian people — relations which dictate a common political strategy toward all central issues concerning both fraternal peoples. In other words, the official level of Palestinian-Jordanian relations is not the only level. In fact, this level is the outcome of a more important and profound level — namely, the popular level.

Here lies the importance of Palestinian-Jordanian relations and the true extent of their strength and their place. This makes us strongly believe that they are inseparable relations that do not tolerate sharp contradictions. This belief has made us more determined to preserve these relations on all levels and to develop and deepen them in a positive manner. In short, they are special relations that have been dictated by history, geography, and common interests between two fraternal peoples. Therefore, [words indistinct] can harm these relations or make them subject to sharp contradictions. These relations are the outcome of historical and geographical factors and circumstances. Furthermore, their form, nature, and level are decided by the people's willpower.

Since this is the case, in whose interest are the Arab analysts and observers trying to fish in troubled waters by their comments and analyses in certain newspapers? Why do they make superficial judgments on such an event by depending on their own preconceived assessments and intentions? We would like to stress an important point — namely, what is being said about the possibility of Jordanian-Syrian rapprochement does not conflict with the policy of the PLO, which is continuously seeking to rectify all Arab situations and relations. This endeavor at this particular phase is the core of PLO policy.

We are indeed striving to remove all Arab differences in order to achieve a unified common stand on the Palestine question and to back our Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO, their sole, legitimate representative. Any rapprochement between any two Arab countries at this stage must lead to the aforementioned objective out of commitment to the central issue of the Arab nation. Indeed, we are striving to settle Arab differences. We generally welcome any rapprochement between any Arab countries. However, such a rapproachement must be on clear bases that keep this rapprochement away from the policy of Arab blocs. We in the PLO are against Arab blocs, because they waste Arab efforts and energies. Any Arab rapprochement must not lead to regional blocs.

At any rate, we do not understand why it is already being said that the expected Jordanian-Syrian rapprochement would be at the expense of the PLO. Why is it said that this rapprochement would be in the interest of Syrian policy when this policy still insists on being hostile to the PLO? Is there anything firm in Arab politics? No, everything is open to change. But is it open to complete identity of viewpoints, or to one side yielding completely to the terms and policies of the other side? Scientific analysis presumes that any rapprochement between any two political powers must be on certain common points, but not necessarily on all points. Why, therefore, do some people precede events and reach their own conclusions? This is one way of publicizing a certain policy and imposing preconditions in an attempt to direct the rapprochement, if it takes place, in a certain direction.

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Fatah's Al-Za'nun on Amman Accord, USSR Ties

PM111232 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 10 Apr 85 p 8

[Interview with Salim al-Za'nun, Fatah Central Committee member and PNC deputy chairman, by an unidentified Gulf Bureau correspondent — date and place not given]

[Excerpts] Question: The main topic of discussion in the Palestinian arena is the Jordanian-Palestinian accord. It is being stressed that there are radical and deep differences in the Palestinian arena as a result of this agreement. In this regard it is being pointed out that the differences began within the Fatah Central Committee itself.

How do you evaluate the Central Committee's attitude toward this agreement and the present situation in the Palestinian arena?

Answer: In Its discussions with the Jordanian delegation, the Palestinian delegation was Always committed to the 17th PNC resolutions and the earlier resolutions, as well as to the guidelines given to it by the PLO Executive Committee. But the dialogue was difficult; it resulted in a Jordanian paper and a Palestinian paper, both of which were published in the press. It was evident that the gap between the two was wide. Any observer who studied the final paper which was agreed upon would see a number of facts, including the fact that in the agreement reached with the Jordanian side the Palestinian side preserved the basic principles and adhered to the PNC resolutions. None of the forbidden things have been accepted; that is the Camp David agreement, Resolution 242, and the Reagan plan. But some people criticized the agreement and attacked it. They would have attacked it even if it consisted of a single line calling for waging war and liberating the land through armed struggle simply because it is an agreement with Jordan.

Now we feel that the talk about the subject of the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement has died down. Why? Because the proposals President Husni Mubarak put to Washington did not meet with a receptive ear. If the flexible is rejected, the moderate is rejected, and the hardliner is rejected then one wonders whether the plans and test balloons put up in the area are worth causing tension and hatred among the comrades in arms.

Question: On the Palestinian level how do you see the future Palestinian move following the U.S. rejection of Arab initiatives and earnest moves toward peace?

Answer: We and Egypt should believe in President Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir's saying — that what has been taken by force can be retrieved only by force. we need to restore Arab solidarity, solidarity that is capable of supporting the Palestinian cause. On the Palestinian level we need to close our ranks and rally around the PNC, which is one of the mainstays of Palestinian national unity. We should help ourselves and those who interfere in our affairs should also help us to realize our national unity. If armed struggle in the occupied territories is less than 50 percent of our actions in general we are not worthy of leading the Palestinian people. At present the level of political struggle is much higher than that of military struggle, and therefore we must rectify this situation so that the level of military action is higher than political action. If this is a criticism of the Palestinian leadership I am indulging in self-criticism. We must pursue this line. If our Zionist enemy does not feel that we are determined to continue the armed struggle there is no way he is going to respond.

Question: From your position on the PNC and the Fatah Central Committee how do you view the possibility of resuming dialogue in the Palestinian arena after things have reached deadlock between the Central Committee on one hand and the Nationalist Alliance and the Democratic Alliance on the other, and of restoring unity to the Palestinian arena?

Answer: If the Palestinians — I mean the leaders among them — sat under the same roof in a place distant from Arab influences they could overcome the present division in the Palestinian arena. We believe in the importance of dialogue between the Palestinian factions and for this reason our resolutions at the PNC provided for several things, including work for the restoration of national unity. We have also set up a committee for inter-Palestinian dialogue which was instructed to initiate dialogue with the PFLP and the DFLP. Then PNC Chairman Shaykh 'Abd al-Hamid al-Sayyih announced his readiness to go to Damascus to continue the dialogue with the others.

I would like to tell you something here. During the Arab Parliamentary Federation meeting in Aden last month the Syrian parliamentary delegation agreed in advance and without reservations with the resolutions on the Palestinian problem as submitted by the Palestinian delegation. That was after heads of the Syrian, Jordanian, and PLO delegations agreed to coordinate their efforts. They told us as parliamentary delegations that if our executive authorities disagree among themselves at this stage, we at these meetings represent our peoples and one day the Syrian, Jordanian, and Palestinian decision is going to be one and the same.

Question: What about Palestinian relations with Aden at this stage in light of Aden's move to form the so-called Palestinian National Salvation Front?

Answer: I do not deny the fact that relations between us and Aden are marred by some differences of views. But if there are those in the Yemeni leadership who believe in the need to conform with Syria's and Libya's stand toward the PLO, there are a considerable number of people in the Yemeni leadership who wish to preserve the PLO under its present leadership and its PNC that met in Amman. Even those whose view of the Amman agreement differs from ours are not opposed to the present PLO leadership. There is some confusion within the Yemeni leadership regarding this matter which will be resolved in the coming days.

Question: How do you evaluate Palestinian-Soviet relations in light of reports that 'Arafat's visit to Moscow was met with acceptance by the Soviet leadership and Gorbachev?

Answer: The Soviet reception of brother Yasir 'Arafat [during Chernenko's funeral] was warm. This was confirmed by most observers. The Soviet ambassador in Kuwait conveyed to us a good impression of this meeting. It must be admitted here that

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FBIS **DAILY REPORT**

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

17 APRIL 1985

Lebanon

Prime Minister Rashid Karami announced the resignation of his government in a statement reported by Beirut radio on 17 April. The fall of the government followed Labor and Education Minister Salim al-Huss's decision to resign because of current events in Beirut, where Amal movement gunmen clashed with followers of the Sunni militia, Al-Murabitun, on 16-17 April, according to the radio. Giving more details of the factional clashes in West Beirut, Voice of Lebanon radio said that Amal and Progressive Socialist Party gunmen were tracking down the remaining Al-Murabitun forces on 17 April and had taken over the building housing Al-Murabitun's clandestine Voice of Arab Lebanon radio, which had been silenced after receiving direct hits. The Voice of Arab Lebanon was unheard on 17 April after broadcasting a report on attempts to secure a cease-fire in West Beirut the previous evening. An Amal movement official cited by the Voice of Lebanon confirmed that Amal and its allies had taken "full control" of the situation in West Beirut on 17 April, capturing most of their opponents' positions. Amal leader Nabih Birri's house was hit by rockets earlier in the fighting, the radio noted.

Meanwhile, the Phalangist Lebanese Forces continued to shell Sidon, wounding over 20 people, Beirut radio reported. In remarks broadcast by the radio before his resignation, Prime Minister Karami urged the forces of the Christian "uprising" to withdraw from Sidon. He also rejected Israel's call to revive the Al-Naqurah talks.

Iran-Iraq War

The Iraqi Air Force hit a "very large maritime target" near Khark Island on the evening of 16 April, an Iraqi military spokesman announced in a statement broadcast by Baghdad radio. Earlier, Iranian planes bombed Iraqi military targets on the southern front, according to an Iranian military report cited by Tehran radio. An Iranian spokesman subsequently denied an Iraqi claim that an Iranian aircraft was shot down in the raid, asserting that all the Iranian planes returned safely, IRNA noted.

Sudan

The composition of the provisional government will be announced "in the next 2 days," Armed Forces Commander General 'Abd al-Rahman Siwar al-Dhahab disclosed in a 16 April statement reported by SUNA. MENA listed the names of the 10 civilians nominated by the national alliance of trade unions and political parties and asserted that contacts have been made with southern rebel leader John Garang in Ethiopia. Southern leaders cited by AFP criticized the proposed makeup of the new cabinet because the three portfolios assigned to southerners will only be "secondary" posts.

In Cairo, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak received a visiting Sudanese military envoy, who stated afterward that all bilateral contracts, charters, and agreements will remain unchanged, MENA noted. As for relations with Saudi Arabia, Omdurman radio reported that General Siwar al-Dhahab has received a message from King Fahd promising to supply Sudan with fuel worth $61 million for a 3-month period.

Libya

Addressing the issue of the Sudanese southern rebel movement in an interview cited by Tripoli Radio, Libyan leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi said efforts are underway to ensure that John Garang's movement will neither "secede" nor continue the war following the change in regimes. Al-Qadhdhafi, who noted that he has met Garang, described him as "our ally" and urged the southerners to unite with Sudan to achieve their rights which are unattainable under "regional rule."

Israel

Egyptian Relations — Egyptian President Mubarak has "absolutely no objections" to meeting Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, but Egypt first wants to see "tangible progress" on Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon and on the Palestine issue, Egyptian presidential advisor Usamah al-Baz stated in remarks reported by MENA. Israeli Minister 'Ezer Weizman, in an interview broadcast by IDF radio following his meeting with Mubarak, assessed the chances for a Peres-Mubarak summit as "very good and reasonable." He also said there are "problems" to overcome before the summit is held "in a few weeks time," *THE JERUSALEM POST* stated, but this would be a task for the joint committee for summit planning which Weizman and Egyptian Prime Minister Kamal Hasan 'Ali set up in their talks.

Murphy Talks — Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin in remarks during his meeting with U.S. Envoy Richard Murphy said that the Jordanian initiative was "insincere" and "merely a tactical move" to bring about dialogue between the United States and the PLO, Jerusalem radio reported.

Pakistan

Eight people died when 2 days of rioting erupted in Karachi following a fatal traffic accident involving two students, London BBC World Service reported. To restore order, troops were sent in and a curfew has been imposed.

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Source Affirms Qaddumi's 'Extreme Opposition'

GF161740 Kuwait AL-WATAN in Arabic 15 Apr 85 p 17

[Exclusive from Amman]

[Excerpt] An informed Palestinian source has affirmed to *AL-WATAN* that Abu al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi] and Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf] are remaining silent these days due to their extreme opposition to Yasir 'Arafat. Abu al-Lutf was quoted a few days ago as saying: If we fail to abolish the [Jordanian-Palestinian] agreement, we have to work to change Abu 'Ammar's [Yasir 'Arafat's] leadership.

Qaddumi Denies Press Report

JN161744 Baghdad Voice of PLO in Arabic 1623 GMT 16 Apr 85

[Text] Brother Abu al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi], head of the PLO Political Department, has denied a report published in the Kuwaiti paper *AL-WATAN* yesterday saying that he has made statements calling for the need to cancel the Jordanian-Palestinian accord and attacking Yasir 'Arafat's leadership. Brother Abu al-Lutf said these tendentious reports are aimed at causing confusion and can only be considered as part of the war against the PLO and its legitimate leadership.

Further on Voice of PLO Interview With Nabil 'Amr

JN161920 Baghdad Voice of PLO in Arabic 1558 GMT 16 Apr 85

["Part II" of interview with Fatah Revolutionary Council member Nabil 'Amr by an unidentified PLO radio reporter — date and place not given; recorded]

[Excerpts] [Reporter] Brother Nabil, the hot issue now is the massacres perpetrated against our people's camps in Lebanon — 'Ayn al-Hulwah and Al-Miyah Wa Miyah — within the framework of implementing the conspiracy of factional division in Lebanon. Brother Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] warned about this situation many times. What are the practical steps and the political moves which the PLO adopted to confront this conspiracy?

['Amr] It is obvious that there is an Israeli-Phalange plan to evict the greatest possible number of Palestinians from southern Lebanon. The plan also aims at classifying [farz] people in southern Lebanon and all of Lebanon. If the plan succeeds, real and practical foundations will be laid down to divide Lebanon into factional geographical cantons. The Palestinians in southern Lebanon have linked their fate to the fate of the Lebanese nationalists.

What is taking place in Sidon and the area has removed many delusions regarding the Syrian role. Are those who have been fighting in Sidon for about 1 month and who are exposed to shells traitors, spies, and Camp David followers? About 300,000-400,000 Palestinians and Lebanese are exposed to attacks from Ja'ja' and Israel. Is the struggle mere slogans? Does the struggle mean to show Abu Musa [Sa'id Musa Muragha] and Ahmad Jibril on the Syrian television [word indistinct]? If you cannot fight because you have agreements with Israel not to fight, then leave those alone who are fighting.

During the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and after signing the cease-fire agreement between Philip Habib and President Hafiz al-Asad, Syria, in accordance with the agreement, abandoned confrontation and we fought alone for about 3 months. Herzog, who became president of the so-called Israel, said: We, the Israelis, should reach an agreement — it can be unwritten — with the Syrians in accordance with which they will maintain the northern area and we will maintain the southern area. Of course, we can say that this is a viewpoint of an Israeli official. However, the events after the Syrian-Israeli cease-fire showed that there is limited agreement that cannot be overlooked. Are there engagements between Israel and Syria? Of course, no. Why did Syria work hard to expel the PLO from Al-Biqa' and the north? [Words indistinct] the Soviets know full well that it is not the Communist Party that is ruling in Syria. They have interests in Syria [words indistinct]. The Syrian Army is a brave Army. The retreats are not in the Army, but in the political decisionmaking and collusions. Yasir 'Arafat said: We will forgive Hafiz al-Asad for his stand in Beirut and for my ['Arafat's] expulsion from Damascus. Let us coordinate together. If you want to fight Israel, then we will fight together; if you want to solve [the problems with Israel], then we will solve them together. 'Arafat told the Soviets: Come and be a witness to our dialogue and agreement with Hafiz al-Asad. Al-Asad rejected this in principle. Why? He who wants to fight Israel cannot intentionally establish bad relations with neighboring countries. If Hafiz al-Asad wants to fight Israel, then he should improve his relations with Jordan, because Jordan is his strategic interior; with Iraq, because it is also a strategic interior; and with Lebanon.

If you want to fight, call for an Arab summit and present a plan of strategic balance that comprises Iraq, the PLO, Jordan, and Egypt.

Why is Al-Asad not working hard to bring Egypt back to the Arab ranks, although important developments took place in Egypt? It is in our interest as an Arab nation to bring Egypt within our ranks. Egypt should return through dialogue. All the Egyptian people are ready to return to the Arab fold and to play their role. This shows that the Syrian regime's slogans are not serious. These slogans aim at misguiding the Arb people.

[Reporter] We thank Brother Nabil 'Amr for this interesting meeting.

['Amr] Thank you. I hope that our radio will achieve success and progress.

PNSF Condemns Husayn-'Arafat Coordination

JN161523 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1400 GMT 16 Apr 85

[Text] Damascus, 16 Apr (SANA) — The Palestinian National Salvation Front [PNSF] has strongly condemned the current joint steps and coordination between Husayn and 'Arafat to implement their joint agreement which deprives the PLO of its right to independent representation and forfeits the Palestinian

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18 APRIL 1985

Lebanon

President Amin al-Jumayyil briefed Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad on the crisis in a lengthy telephone conversation and then contacted Prime Minister Rashid Karami, who agreed to continue to serve in a caretaker role until the government crisis is resolved, Beirut radio reported. Beirut radio also broadcast remarks by Amal movement leader Nabih Birri deploring the "nightmare" of sectarian violence in West Beirut and accusing "newcomers, foreigners, and guests" of backing an "uprising" by those opposed to plans for a meeting of national forces to study the security situation. The Amal leader subsequently hosted a meeting attended by Progressive Socialist Party leader Walid Junblatt and other leftist party leaders at which the conferees agreed to establish a unified military command and a joint strike force to deal with security problems, according to a statement broadcast by the clandestine Voice of the Mountain radio. The statement also viewed the security of Palestinian camps "as part of Lebanon's national security" and announced a mobilization of all forces to repel the Phalangist "aggression" against Sidon.

As for the military situation in Beirut, Voice of Lebanon radio reported that Al-Murabitun gunmen took refuge in the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian camps, which were subsequently surrounded by Amal gunmen. Amal and its allies gained near total control over West Beirut in the fighting, which caused over 60 casualties, the radio said. In Baghdad, a PLO Executive Committee statement cited by INA viewed the current events in Beirut as the beginning of a new phase of an "Israeli-U.S. plot" to end the Palestinian presence in Lebanon. In another military development, Israeli planes attacked a Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine base at Barr Ilyas in the Al-Biqa' Valley on 17 April, IDF radio announced citing the IDF spokesman. Meanwhile, 10 IDF soldiers were wounded in three separate incidents in the south the same day, Jerusalem radio disclosed.

Israel-Egypt

No date has been set for a summit between Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, Minister 'Ezer Weizman emphasized in a news conference reported by ITIM, but he spoke of much "goodwill" during his Egyptian talks even though the situation remains "chilly." As for the Egyptian side, Prime Minister Kamal Hasan 'Ali stressed ties with Israel will "greatly improve" although it is "still too early" to set a summit date, Jerusalem radio stated.

Sudan

While Muslim Brotherhood leader Hasan al-Turabi "threatened to open fire" on those who want to revoke Islamic law, southern Sudanese politicians made repeal of Islamic laws a condition for their participation in the transitional government, according to AFP reports. Meanwhile, Armed Forces Commander in Chief Colonel 'Abd al-Rahman Muhammad Hasan Siwar al-Dhahab, in an interview with Egypt's *AL-AHALI* cited by Omdurman radio, confirmed his intent to revoke the decree dividing the south into three regions.

Jordan

A 17 April government policy statement broadcast on Amman radio called for better communication and cooperation between the executive and legislative branches in domestic Arab, and international areas.

Iran

Commenting on the plan to reorganize the Iranian Army in a *JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI interview cited by IRNA, Armed* Forces Chief Colonel Esma'il Sohrabi said the Majlis defense commission has drawn up the new organization plan and approved its principles, adding that both the Majlis and Army are studying changes for the personnel and decisionmaking structures.

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